Flowers and Bulrushes

Unit Seven

Lesson 3
Coil Pots

Objectives:

- To understand the terms *slip, score, coil,* and *wedge*.
- To apply the terms *wedge*, and *slip* and *score*.
- To practice the coil method of handbuilding with clay.

Advance Preparation:

- On the board, print or post the scripture, "*Obey them that have the rule over you*," and draw a big heart underneath it.
- Divide the clay into 16-ounce portions. Prepare a clay coil (refer to **#2. Rolling a coil** under **STEP 2** of **"Method"**), and mix a small container of slip (see **#5. Slip** also under **STEP 2** of **"Method"**) for every two children.
- Set up the tables with pencils or sticks, and slip containers, and display the clay coil. Do not pass out the lumps of clay yet.

Materials:

- CHOOSE ART STUDENT BOOKLET **pages 10 - 13**
- one container of slip (mixture of clay and water) for every two children
- a few textured materials or objects such as burlap, a vegetable grater, toy wheels, weeds (for imprinting texture)
- a piece of wire, at least 15" long

One / student of each of the following:

- a 16-ounce lump of clay
- a pencil (or stick such as wooden doweling sharpened at one end)
- a knife

Method:

STEP 1: Scripture talk

Refer to the scripture posted or printed on the board. Ask the children to name some of the people who *"have the rule over them."* Then discuss the following questions:

1. What have we learned about love and rules? *(that rules are made because someone loves us* or *they are made for our own good)*

2. Do we need to know the reason before we obey God's rules? *(no)*

3. Does God have a good reason when he gives us a rule? *(yes)*

4. Do our parents and teachers have good reasons when they give us a rule? *(yes)*

Refer to the list found under **TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCING THE SCRIPTURAL THEME** on ***page 155 of this unit***, and review a few examples of parents' rules and the reasons why they were made. Ask the children to contribute others.

Read *Billy's Big Mistake* on **pages 10 to 12** of the student booklet.

After reading the story, ask the children if they can identify, from the items on the table, the *slip* and the *coil*. Ask someone if he or she wants to try to demonstrate what *slip and score* means. Let the student use a pencil (or sharpened wooden stick) and the clay coil to demonstrate the procedure. (Some may know from previous experience.) If no one is able to demonstrate, then take the opportunity to do the demonstration yourself. (Refer to **#4. Score** and **#5. Slip** from **STEP 2** under **"Method."**)

Pass out **page 13** and read through the questions aloud for the 'A' students. Have the children answer the questions. **Answer keys are provided** on ***pages 168 and 169 of this unit.***

Distribute a 16-ounce lump of clay to each student.

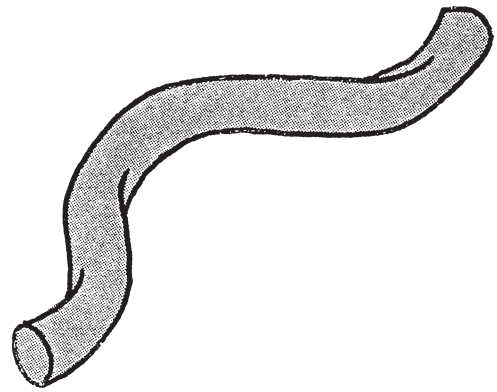
STEP 2: Coil pot techniques

Tell the children that, while many clay pots are made on a potter's wheel, such pots, bowls and mugs can also be made completely by hand. There are several handbuilding methods. The *coil method* is one of them. Today they will make a clay bowl or mug like the ones the children made in *Billy's Big Mistake*. Instruct them according to the following techniques:

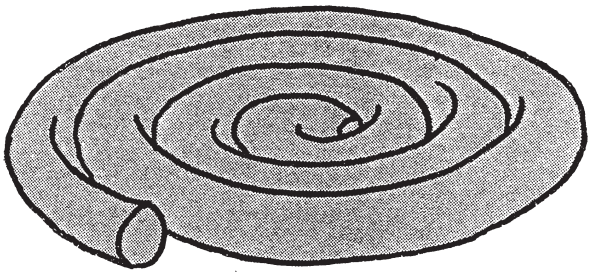
1. **Wedging:** *Wedging* is the process of kneading the clay with the hands to make it more malleable for working and to remove air bubbles, which can weaken the walls of the clay pot.

Have each child wedge his or her own piece of clay. Using the wire provided, periodically cut through some of the lumps of clay to check for bubbles. Spend 2 - 3 minutes as a group wedging the clay.

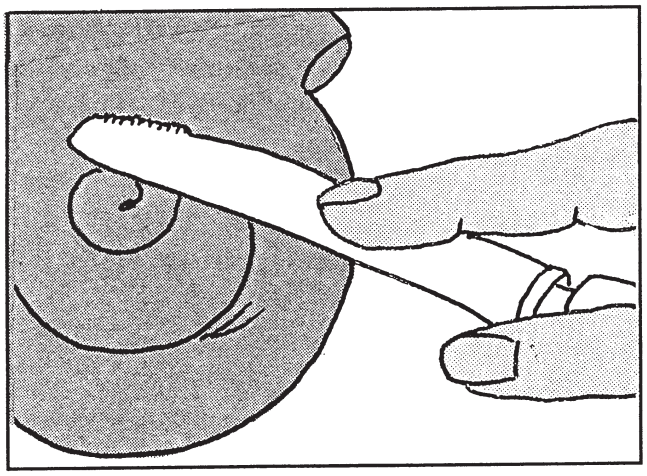
2. **Rolling a coil:** Have each student tear off a chunk of clay from his or her 16-ounce lump: a piece that will just fit into the palm of the hand. Instruct the children to roll the clay on the surface of the table (with one hand or two) to make a long sausage-shaped *coil*. Let them practice rolling a few such coils, attempting to make them the same thickness each time. An appropriate thickness for each coil might be approximately 1/2" in diameter. See the illustration below:



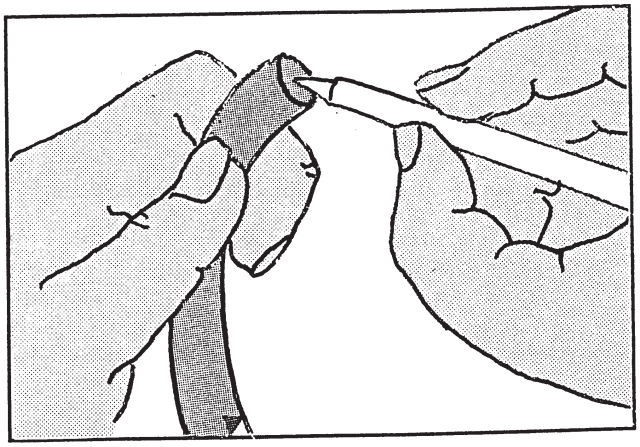
3. **Making the base:** Instruct the children to make a base for their clay pots by wrapping a coil as illustrated below:



Have them use the knives to spread the clay across itself, smoothing out the coil ridges and thus, welding the joins together as in the illustration below:

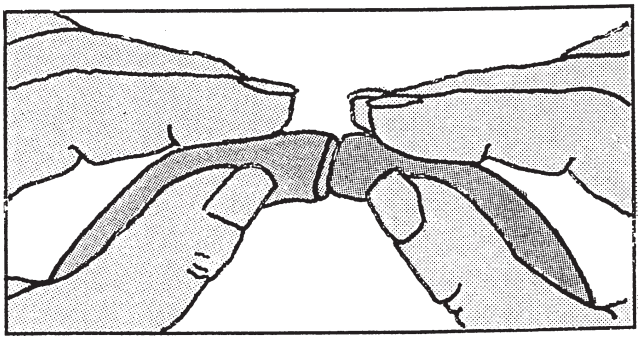


4. **Score:** To *score*, use a pointed instrument such as a pencil or a sharpened piece of wooden doweling, and poke or scratch little holes into the surface of the piece of clay that is to be joined to another piece. Review the process of scoring, using a pencil, or piece of doweling and the two ends of a coil. See the following illustration:



5. **Slip:** *Slip* is a mixture of clay and water, stirred and worked with the fingers to a consistency of thick cream. To "slip" means to apply this paste along a surface, usually after it has been scored. It can be applied with the fingers. *Slip and score* refers to the process of poking or scratching holes and adding slip before making a join. The liquid clay (slip) fills the holes and forms a bond between the two pieces as they dry.

Add slip to the scored ends of the pieces of coil you are planning to join and press them together as illustrated below:



6. **Building up the sides:** The children will roll a separate coil for each layer of the pot, building up the sides, one coil at a time. Each coil will have to be cut the right length to fit around the circumference of the base. The children should slip and score the joins in each coil, as illustrated on the previous page, as well as slipping and scoring one coil to the next. The coil pot need not be more than three or four coils high. See *Figure 1*:

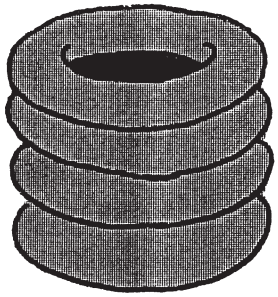


Figure 1

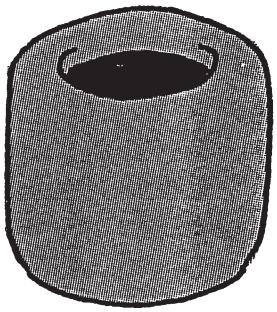
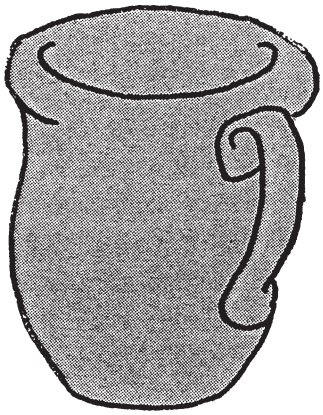


Figure 2

The pots may be left with the ridges of each coil visible (as in *Figure 1*), or it the children prefer, they may use a small amount of slip to smooth the outer walls (as in *Figure 2*).

CAUTION: Use slip sparingly, and make sure it is of a thick consistency; otherwise, the pot will become wet and soggy and may collapse. However, add slip or water if the clay becomes too dry and little cracks begin to appear.

The children may discover variations of the coil pot like a jewelry box, soup bowl, or mug. Encourage them in their inventiveness. To add a handle to a coil pot, first roll a clay coil and bend it. Then, as in the following illustration, press the handle onto the mug, and remembering to slip and score, gently blend the clay into the wall of the mug.



You may want to create a "Billy's mug" and wait with the children to see what will happen to the mug in the drying process. Purposely make the joins on the last two coils and the handle carelessly so that the mug will, in fact, come apart.

7. **Imprinting texture:** Use found objects including weeds, burlap, toy tractor tires, spools or any other object that will press into the clay to leave an interesting textured design. You will find that the clay must not be too wet or too dry, but soft and pliable, for the print to "take" properly. (Many children will probably be too absorbed in building to be interested in imprinting.)

8. **Drying:** Leave the pots to dry until next class in a closed-in space such as a cupboard, or underneath an overturned box. The clay must be protected from air flow so that it can dry slowly and evenly. Thin projections such as small handles should be covered with wet paper towels in an effort to slow the handle's

drying time to match the drying time of the pot to which it is attached. Doing so helps to prevent cracks and breakage.

It might be kind to warn the children that even though they have correctly followed the handbuilding procedures, they may still find a few breaks when the pots have dried. By preparing them for such a possibility, you will prevent some of the more sensitive children from feeling that they are responsible for cracks and breaks that inevitably occur from time to time.